GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3577
ANSWERED ON:17.04.2000
IDENTITY CARDS TO VOTERS
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA;DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA

Will the Minister of LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission of India has requested the Government to make arrangements for issuance of identity card to all voters in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the States where the voters identity cards have been issued to all the voters till December, 1999;

(c) the details of those States where production of identity cards were made mandatory for casting votes in the elections held in February, 2000 along with the basis on which such a decision was taken;

(d) whether the Government of Haryana has issues identity cards to all its voters;

(e) if so, the details of those States which have expressed their inabilities to do so;

(f) the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and (g) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to implement the orders of the Election Commission And casting the votes on the basis of identity card will be made mandatory in each State?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS

(SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Photo Identity cards have not yet been issued to all electors in the country. About thirty-eight crore electors representing 62% of the eligible electors of the country have so far been provided Photo Identity Cards. The scheme has so far not been extended to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The work has also not started in Assam and Mizoram till now, although the programme has been extended to these States. According to the Election Commission, the scheme of issue of Photo Identity Cards to electors is not a project but an ongoing programme and no time limit can be fixed for completion of such a programme. The registration of electors is a continuous process (except for a brief period between the last date for filing nomination and completion of election process.) Therefore, the scheme of issue of Photo Identity Cards to the registered electors is also a continuous programme and every new elector has also to be covered by the scheme.

(c) The production of Electoral Photo Identity Cards was insisted upon in the recently held general elections to the Legislative Assembly of Haryana in February, 2000. The Commission had also prescribed other means of identification for the electors not provided with Photo Identity Cards.

(d) No, Sir. Out of a total of 11,107,835 electors, 9831,338 electors have been issued Photo Identity Cards in Haryana.

(e) No State/Union territory has expressed its inability to implement the programme of Electoral Photo Identity CardsHowever, the scheme has so far not been extended to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The work has also not started in Assam and Mizoram till now, although the programme has been extended to these States.

(f) The Government has extended its support for this programme and is providing necessary funds for this programme which is sharable between the Union and the State Governments on 50:50 basis.

(g) The scheme is being monitored by the Election Commission and it has stated that complete coverage of the entire electorate is not possible at a given point of time due to new additions in the Electoral Rolls. At present, the Government has no proposal to make production of Photo Identity Cards mandatory at the time of voting. It may also be stated that the orders of the Election Commission issued in 1994 are sub-judice before the Supreme Court of India.